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INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
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RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0303
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 9573
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
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RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 001338

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DOE FOR GEORGE PERSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/14/2018
TAGS: [KPKO](#) [PGOV](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [MARR](#) [SO](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: ARMY CLAIMS SOMALIA-BOUND BATTALION
NEARLY READY

REF: A. ABUJA 64
[1](#)B. 07 ABUJA 1320

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b
& d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: The GON has publicly stated that their long-promised AMISOM peacekeeping battalion is ready for deployment. In a June 25, 2008 report by Reuters, Nigerian Army spokesman Brigadier General Emeka Onwuamaegbu not only said that an 800-strong battalion was ready to deploy, but that Nigeria had "the capacity to (send) more than one if the government decides that is what they want." Privately, the GON has told Post that the unit would be deployment-ready 60 days after the receipt of \$3 million in USG-supplied equipment. A best-case scenario could see Nigerians in-country by November or December. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Brigadier General Onwuamaegbu's statement announced GON readiness of an 800-man battalion to deploy to Somalia, and highlighted that the Nigerian armed forces stood prepared to send more troops if directed to do so by the GON. In private meetings Nigerian Defense officials have told Post that the Somalia peacekeeping unit will be deployment-ready 60 days after they receive \$3 million worth of equipment which the USG has promised to provide.

[1](#)3. (C) Comment: Given that the Department has said it will need at least two months to deliver the promised goods, the earliest that Nigerian peacekeepers would be ready to deploy to Somalia is November or December. A November date would depend on not only the Nigerians keeping to their 60-day promise, but also the USG-supplied equipment being delivered by air, which per the Department would use up a significant portion of the \$3 million. Delivery by sea would take approximately a month longer, but would cost considerably less. Post will continue to monitor the status of Nigeria's AMISOM-bound troops and will keep Department notified of developments. End comment.
SANDERS